

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal  
CONDUCTED BY  
**CHARLES DICKENS**  
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED  
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 507. NEW SERIES. SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1878. PRICE TWOPENCE.

## ALL OR NOTHING.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOBY,

AUTHOR OF "A HOUSE OF CARDS," "GRIFFITH'S DOUBLE,"  
&c. &c.

### CHAPTER VII. THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE.

THE railway line from Colombo to Kandy has been pronounced to be "the most beautiful in the world;" running as it does through a country which combines all the charms of park, garden, and forest scenery, with a horizon of noble and graceful mountains. Sir Wilfrid Esdaile and Edward Dunstan, after a brief stay at Colombo, where they also felt the astonishment that so many travellers express at the spectacle presented by vigorous cricket-playing under the burning afternoon sun of Ceylon, resumed their journey, and were met at the termination of it by a person, to making whose acquaintance Dunstan had looked forward with curiosity and interest.

Very cordial were the greetings exchanged between Sir Wilfrid Esdaile and the tall, dark, large-limbed, brown-eyed, auburn-bearded Scotchman, who had undertaken the management of a portion of Esdaile's inheritance which Esdaile himself had simply regarded with dismay. The new arrivals took their places in a rough-looking wagonette, and were driven off in the direction of the plantation, twenty miles away; and while the employer and employed were talking eagerly about persons and things far removed from the scene through which they were passing, Edward Dunstan, after the first few sentences that followed on his friend's introduction of him to Mr. Sandilands,

kept silence, occupying himself with a close observation of the Scotch manager.

The result was favourable to the mind of Edward Dunstan, who was easily swayed by externals, and rather prided himself on "taking to a fellow at once, if he was ever to take to him at all."

Here was a capable-looking man, he thought, with a keen, decided face, and a way with him which conveyed the impression that he could manage anything in the world he thought it worth his while to put his mind to. If he had only had one of the big chances that come in the way of highly-born dunderheads, a man with that face, and that unhesitating, knowledgeable way of talking, would have made his mark in any of the important avocations of the world; but he had not been so fortunate, and the next best thing was to make a success of a little chance, like that which had come to him. Here was a man, Dunstan thought, who could look through an unsatisfactory condition, like his, and see what could be done with it for the best. Dunstan was—not without a lurking consciousness that being so implied weakness of character—a good deal given to leaning on other people; and the solid independence that expressed itself in John Sandilands' face, figure, manner, and way of talking, was particularly calculated to attract him. In the first place he looked the picture of health, and that, in itself, was wonderful to Dunstan, who could not think how he managed it. Ceylon was better than India, to be sure; but, all the same, there was always a good deal of fever about; and yet he could swear that John Sandilands had never had a touch of it. His steady eyes were too bright, his

skin was too clear, his hair and beard were too glossy, his long, slight, strong hands looked too cool, and obeyed the orders of his brain too closely, as he skillfully drove the horses that were the best-treated animals Dunstan had yet seen in Ceylon, for the fever fiend ever to have iced or scorched that firmly-knit frame. Of course, observing these physical facts respecting John Sandilands, it was only natural that Dunstan, though not devoted to his profession, should think that it was a great pity such a man as Sandilands should have been anything but a soldier!

The Scotchman was singularly unlike both his guests; but, though he had neither the merry and prosperous expression of the handsome Sir Wilfrid, nor the marked refinement and somewhat pensive good looks of Edward Dunstan, he was a finer type of manhood than either. Perhaps nobody, not even a woman, had ever called John Sandilands handsome; but then it had probably never occurred to anybody who had been half an hour in his company to remember whether he was good-looking or not.

The travellers were not sorry to find themselves housed in the bungalow, which was surrounded by a clear space of hard-beaten earth bounded by a bamboo paling, beyond which were noble trees of various species, while in the distance on each side spread the "plantation" proper. Though much superior in neatness and order to most dwellings of the kind, John Sandilands' bungalow, and the offices and works in its rear, had a good deal of the bare and comfortless appearance that seems inseparable from all such places. The beauty of the sky, the earth, and the climate is enough, or people seem to think so; for the rest, space and shelter are all the houses are expected to bestow.

Cordial relations had established themselves between John Sandilands and Edward Dunstan before the first day of their companionship had closed, and the former expressed himself to Esdaile as much interested in his friend, ready to advise him to the best of his ability, and to begin, as soon as he should wish, the process of showing him how things ought to be done on a coffee-plantation whose manager means to make it pay.

"I fancy he could never make such a hand of it as you are doing, however," said Esdaile, on the day following their arrival, when he and Sandilands had been "going round," while Dunstan was resting.

"He has not the health, in the first place. You're wonderful in that way, you know. You might never have been off your native heath, for any touch of the climate there's upon you."

"My native heath is Glasgow," said Sandilands, smiling, "and I was never well there. Dunstan would do here as well as I, if he neither smoked nor drank, and did not take to moping."

"Aye, there's the rub. It is not easy for a man with a big disappointment in his life to settle down to this sort of thing."

Sir Wilfrid Esdaile had not yet attained to any very clear knowledge of what "sort of thing" the life of a coffee-planter really was, but he had not seen anything to shake his previous general conviction that he, individually, should hate it.

"No," thought John Sandilands, "this is rather the sort of thing for a man with a great hope in his life." And his fancy swiftly cleft the barriers of space, and showed him, far across the sea, the face of a girl, in whose widely different life a hope, similar to that which brightened his own, burned steadily.

"It's not easy," he replied aloud, "for a man to settle to anything that is completely different from what he has been brought up to expect. I think the worst of misfortunes is a bringing up in great expectations."

"When they're not fulfilled—yes. I think Dunstan has stood it wonderfully well; I should have gone to the bad altogether in his place."

Then they talked of other matters, and Sir Wilfrid Esdaile did not say anything which implied that Dunstan had a cause of discontent and heartburning, beyond the disappointment which Admiral Drummond's will had occasioned him.

The coffee-plantation in which Dunstan thought of buying a share was at a considerable distance from Esdaile's, and according to the hospitable practice of the island, the manager invited Sandilands and his friends to go on a visit of several days to him. This invitation suited Dunstan's purpose well, and it was agreed that he and Sandilands should accept it, while Sir Wilfrid Esdaile made one or two short excursions, and studied the resources of Kandy. He was very good-humoured, and he had a sincere liking for Sandilands, but after a week, he had had quite enough of his own plantation, with all its strongly appealing claims to interest—especially as the manager was not to be

trifled with when business was in question, and insisted not only upon detailing to him, but upon making him understand, everything which was involved in the business of a coffee-plantation. Esdaile submitted, but he felt that he really could not stand anybody else's works, and coolies, and "returns," so he excused himself; and it was arranged that Sandilands, who could get away just at that time without inconvenience, and Dunstan, who, simply because every day witnessed an advance in the restoration of his health, began to think he should like the life of a planter, should "drop" Esdaile at Kandy, and take him up on their return. A mail from England would be due in five days; they would pick up their letters and papers also at the same time.

"I don't know a more enviable fellow in the world than Esdaile," was almost the first observation made by Dunstan, after he and Sandilands had left Sir Wilfrid, and were on their way to their destination, journeying along a terribly bad road, but surrounded by exquisite scenery. "He has money and liberty and health, and in fact everything."

"Such a happy temper too; I fancy a man must have that to enjoy even the best things of life. No doubt he will get a good deal taken in in his time, but he will mind it less than most men. Nothing will ever sour Esdaile."

Five days later, the three young men met again at Kandy, and Sir Wilfrid was full of the charms and delights of the place. He had had a real good time of it; had met several capital good fellows, and found Mr. Gilchrist had come up there from Galle.

"An extraordinary old man," said Esdaile, as he and Dunstan were sitting in the verandah of the hotel, while Sandilands had gone to the post-office; "he knows everybody, it seems to me, though he never goes 'home,' as he still calls England, and most people, so far as one knows, do not come to Ceylon. A tremendous old gossip. He knows all about me, evidently, a great deal more about my father than I know; and also all about you."

"All about me!" said Dunstan; "I think that's impossible. I never heard of him until five minutes before I landed at Galle, and I was in his company afterwards about three."

"No matter, he knows all about you. If you had not told me the story of Admiral

Drummond, his wife, and his will, yourself, I should have heard it from old Gilchrist, if I would have let him tell it. You had some fellow-travellers, it appears, who were of opinion that the admiral had made a deplorable mistake, and that even as it is, you are an eligible."

"Oh," said Dunstan, laughing, but a little annoyed too; "that's too bad—we were very good friends—but—"

"Meaning yourself and the fair Amabel, as Mr. Gilchrist calls her, with all the seriousness of an Old World novel. I am to make her acquaintance when I get back to England, as the bearer of a lot of shell things from Mr. Gilchrist. By-the-bye, the old gentleman said he would look round, I mean—" added Sir Wilfrid, correcting himself, and with exact mimicry of Mr. Gilchrist's voice and manner—"he said he would do himself the honour of calling on me to-day, and would hope to have the pleasure of seeing my friends."

At this moment, John Sandilands, with his hands full of letters, and followed by a native servant who carried a thick parcel of similar documents and a bundle of newspapers, entered the verandah.

"Not a bad bag," he said, as he approached, and deposited his papers upon one of the little tables. "Heaps of newspapers and letters for you, Sir Wilfrid"—the servant laid them on the table which stood between Esdaile and Dunstan—"and something blue and business-like for you, Dunstan. Will you inspect them here? We have it all to ourselves."

The verandah was indeed occupied only by their three selves for the moment. John Sandilands spread his letters in an orderly fashion on the tables, and began to work through them methodically. There was, however, one which he did not open on the present occasion. A quick glance had satisfied him that this particular letter was among the contents of the packet destined for him; he had picked it out, and put it away in his pocket-book for enjoyment at a quiet time, when he should have mastered the business matters which the mail had brought him.

The missive for Dunstan was addressed in a hand which he did not recognise, and he took it up with absolute unconcern. The contents of the blue linen-lined cover proved to be a brief communication from a solicitor in London, with whom he was not acquainted, to the effect that, pursuant to instructions received, he had to inform Captain Dunstan of the

decease, at Bevis, Suffolk, of the widow of the late Admiral Drummond; and also of the fact that the deceased lady had bequeathed to Captain Dunstan all the property of every kind that had been left to her by her late husband. A thin little letter in a black-bordered envelope was enclosed in the lawyer's calm and curt epistle, but it fell to the ground unnoticed as Edward Dunstan read again and again the few lines that had changed his fate. The letter ended with an expression of the hope of Mr. Cleeve that Captain Dunstan would communicate with him at his earliest convenience, and an assurance of Mr. Cleeve's readiness to carry out any instructions with which he might be favoured. Many feelings, or rather vague sensations, for the news was as yet too new to be really felt, passed over Edward Dunstan—surprise, pleasure, the excitement of a great event, a sudden sense of change, bewildering and almost oppressive—and yet under which he was conscious of a strange prevision of every detail of his daily life which would be affected by that change; rising above all a sense of incredulity. This thing could not be; surely the reversal of all that had befallen him at the most important period of his life, the repeal of the sentence that had shut him out from the paradise of rich men, the sheathing of the flaming sword that barred him from its gates, could not have come to pass? He looked up from the letter; he passed his hand over his eyes, like one light-headed; his glance fell upon the scene around him, upon his two companions, each absorbed in the perusal of letters, and an indistinct question came into his mind. If he could have put it into form it would have been: "Is this place the same as it was before I read that letter?" But for the moment nothing was distinct that was near and actual. With the wonderful velocity of thought and imagination he had sped to England; he saw the old familiar scenes that had grown so unfamiliar to him of late; he saw the days of his boyhood, the face of his dead mother, the broad lands, of which, notwithstanding the prevailing incredulity that was in his thoughts, he was now the owner; the scenes, dreary and monotonous, of his life in India. And all this in a speck of time so brief, that it was the irrepressible exclamation to which he gave utterance as his eyes took in the meaning of the lawyer's letter, and the sense of contrast rushed over him,

that attracted the attention of Sir Wilfrid Esdaile and John Sandilands.

"What's the matter?" asked the former quickly. "Anything wrong, Dunstan?"

"Nothing wrong, but something very strange and surprising. I can hardly believe it; but Mrs. Drummond is dead—and—"

"And she has left the place and the money to a hospital, or her lapdog?"

Sir Wilfrid spoke with some impatience. He hated a pause in any communication.

"She has left the place and the money to me!"

"No!" exclaimed Esdaile, starting up, and clapping his hand down on Dunstan's shoulder. "You don't mean it! My dear fellow, what splendid news!"

"I do mean it; though I don't quite believe it. Read it out," and Dunstan handed Mr. Cleeve's letter to John Sandilands, who, having read it aloud, observed:

"There's no doubt about it. Nothing could be more certain, more sweet, or more short than that communication. I congratulate you heartily."

"It's rather puzzling, though," said Dunstan; "what made Mrs. Drummond change her mind?"

"Ah," said Sandilands, with a comical look, "now you are unreasonable. It is much more pleasant than puzzling. The old lady may have had scruples of conscience."

"Scruples!" said Dunstan. "Not she. Indeed, why should anyone, in her place, have had any scruples? The admiral was in his right. I am glad I told you so, Esdaile, before this strange thing came to pass. The strangeness of it passes all the appearance of it, I assure you, odd as that is, for Mrs. Drummond never liked me; she never even tried to like me, at a time when it might have pleased my uncle if she had tried. It was the only thing she ever neglected to do that could have pleased him, I do believe, for she was a model wife; that I had sense enough to know at the time. Afterwards, it would not have mattered. The admiral saw everything through her eyes, and heard everything with her ears. Never mind; he might have done worse."

"Hardly, in your case, though you can certainly afford to forgive him now," said Sandilands; "she has, however, made reparation, and very apropos. I should, however, imagine that she did not act on an impulse in this matter. Depend on it, you have been her chosen heir all this time."

"No, you are wrong; though that notion must seem to everybody except myself the most reasonable and likely. But I must not do her even a retrospective injustice. I have reason to know that she never intended to do anything for me. Mrs. Drummond was not a pleasant person, but she was one of the most truthful and upright women in the world, and she would not have allowed me, for any motive of dislike on her own part, to be misled all this time about my future, and to do the things I have had to do, under the obligations of no expectations at all, if she had meant all along to make me her heir."

"When did you see her last?" asked Esdaile.

"Once only since the time I told you of, after the admiral's death." Dunstan's face looked dark and moody, as though the recollection were anything but a pleasant one. "She sent for me, and I went to Bevis for a week. We were perfectly frank with one another. She told me on that occasion I had nothing to expect from her, and I told her I had never formed any expectations. She requested me to remain a few days at the old place, and I did so. It was very stiff and very slow, but she meant a kindness, or at all events a civility, and I believe I wanted to show her that I was not so much cut up by my ill luck as might have been expected. I daresay Mrs. Drummond thought better of me on that occasion than she had ever thought before; but, if she did, she did not express her sentiments. We parted very civilly, and I left Bevis with a firm belief that I should never see the place again. So that, you see, I am in a position to assure you, Sandilands, that this is not a decision taken beforehand, and concealed out of any fanciful motive, such as administering a good lesson to me in self-reliance, or patience, or any of the virtues in which the old lady very correctly believed me to be sadly deficient."

"Yes," said Sandilands, "I see we must abandon the solution, that has both reason and a bit of romance in its favour. But what did you expect she would do with the place?"

When John Sandilands asked this question, Esdaile was occupied in gathering up from the floor a number of his own letters and papers, scattered by the vigorous movement with which he had welcomed Dunstan's first startling announcement. He collected the stragglers, crammed them

into his pocket, and backed Sandilands' question with the remark:

"Ah yes, by-the-bye, I have always forgotten to ask you that."

"That is just what I cannot tell you. Mrs. Drummond had no sisters, brothers, nephews, or nieces, and if she had any more distant relatives, I never knew it. She was very kind to the people about, and liberal to the local institutions, as they call them; gave the parson any subscriptions he wanted, and all that kind of thing; but I don't think she went in for hospitals or big charities, and it never seemed likely she would do anything in the Peabody line. The fact is, I did not think about the matter at all. When it was quite plain that Bevis was not to be mine, I did not trouble myself about whose Bevis was to be. Besides, she was a hale old lady, likely to live a thousand years, and so she might have done, and welcome, for me. It was the admiral who, though I always maintained that he was in his right, gave me the unkindest cut of all, not Mrs. Drummond."

"Well," said Esdaile, cheerily, "it's all square now; and you are not much the worse. How odd you must feel it, old fellow, don't you?"

"I hardly know how I feel it yet; rather as if I were asleep, and, as Mark Tapleysays, 'dreamin' too pleasant to last.'"

"The responsibilities of landed proprietorship," remarked John Sandilands, "will very soon come to you with the sober certainty of waking bliss. I suppose," he added dryly, "the negotiations for a share in Perkins's plantation are not to be proceeded with?"

Dunstan laughed. "No, I think not. How seriously we were discussing it only this morning," he said; "and all the time we were up there this news was on its way. How little we ever know about ourselves or anybody else. I am aware that I am making a most commonplace observation, but that sort of thing does come very strongly to one's mind now and then. I suppose," he added, "I must instruct this Mr. Cleeve, as he calls it, without delay; though I don't exactly know what he means."

"He means, I take it, that you are expected to make it known when you intend to return to England and take possession. You can write by the Messageries boat, you know, the day after to-morrow. Your letters must be ready for the morning."

Esdaile had been leaning thoughtfully

over the rail of the verandah, while Dunstan and Sandilands exchanged these few sentences. He now turned his head, and spoke in a half whisper:

"Here's old Gilchrist coming along, all in white, and apparently as cool as a cucumber in northern climes. I wonder if he knows this particular bit of news?"

"I would rather not have to talk to him just now," said Dunstan, retreating on the inner side of the verandah. "Don't say anything to him if you can help it. I'll go and think over my 'instructions' to Mr. Cleeve."

"He takes it pretty coolly, doesn't he?" said Sandilands. "It is the strangest turn of the wheel of fortune that ever came under my observation; the strangest thing I ever heard of, out of a book."

"It is an astounding and stunning event; but, my dear fellow, we, being Englishmen and superior to the emotions, are neither astounded nor stunned by anything that befalls ourselves or other people. I'm uncommonly glad though, it's a splendid bit of luck for Dunstan. A better bit of luck than you know of, as I remember now; it means more than an estate."

"What more?"

"A wife. Only woman he ever loved; parted by the frown of fortune: reunited by her smile; reward of constancy; that kind of thing. How d'ye do, sir; very glad to see you."

And Sir Wilfrid Esdaile advanced, with a pleasant deference which was one of the peculiar charms of his manner, to meet the old civilian, who was ushered into the verandah by a profusely polite native.

After a little talk with Mr. Gilchrist, who had not heard the news of the change in Captain Dunstan's fortunes, and who was evidently sorry to have missed an opportunity of bearing further testimony to his own admiration of the fair Amabel, John Sandilands also retired, and on the conclusion of Mr. Gilchrist's visit, Sir Wilfrid Esdaile was left alone with his English newspapers. They were of various dates, and he found a good many bits of intelligence in them, fashionable and otherwise, which interested him; among others, the announcement of the death of Mrs. Drummond, of Bevis.

"After all, it's very consoling and assuring to see it in print," said Sir Wilfrid to himself, without meaning any malice or ill-will to the deceased lady by the reflection. And then he folded the newspaper with that particular paragraph

conveniently arranged to meet the eye, in order that he might give Edward Dunstan the satisfaction of seeing it also, and opened a journal of a few days' later date.

"So Lady Rosa has made her game at last," was Sir Wilfrid Esdaile's commentary upon something he saw there. "It must be a better thing for the girl than home. They say Thornton's a good fellow; but I should never have thought she would have fancied him. Very likely she didn't—if Lady Rosa did, it would do just as well. And Tom Dillon, too; I didn't think that was to be till winter! Poor fellow, he was awfully in love, but he did look dismal when he told me how his Lucy had insisted on his giving up cigars and steeplechasing." With these, and sundry similar comments, did Sir Wilfrid Esdaile peruse the passing record of the world from which he was undergoing a temporary separation. He knew almost everybody who was anybody, and there was a good deal of news afloat about everybody. His newspapers amused him very well until dinner, when the three young men met again, and Esdaile asked Dunstan whether he had written his letters. Dunstan said yes, they were all ready.

"And how have you instructed Mr. Cleeve?"

"That I will give him my instructions in person, with as little delay as possible. How I wish you could go home with me, Esdaile. It will be such dull work to go down to Bevis all alone."

"I don't mind if I do," said Sir Wilfrid in his light-minded way; "it would be good fun to see you as the man in possession, and I can come out again any time. Besides, you've quite done with me, Sandilands, haven't you?"

"Yes," returned John Sandilands, dryly, "from a business point of view, I have quite done with you; and, I am bound to say, you were easily exhausted."

"Then that's settled," said Dunstan; and the little party made a very pleasant evening of it. Dunstan, upon whom the excitement of the day, for all his "cool" taking of its great event, had told, left the others early, and they found many subjects of discussion; among others, what Sir Wilfrid called "the Chumleigh marriage," when, by a casual observation, he discovered that John Sandilands had been informed by a correspondent of all the details of that event.

"Are you acquainted with Colonel and Lady Rosa Chumleigh?" asked John San-

dilands, apropos of a remark of Esdaile's upon the marriages of the season.

"Yes; I know them very well."

"Lady Rosa's rather a Tartar, isn't she?"

"Crim! I should say," assented Esdaile, with emphasis; "I never was so much afraid of anyone in my life; and I never pitied anyone more than the colonel. Poor old boy! Do you know them?"

"No. I know a good deal of them, in a way that I mean to tell you about. Miss Chumleigh's is one of the matches of the season."

"So I see. I don't know much of Thornton, beyond what everybody knows, that he is very rich. She is an uncommonly pretty girl, and very nice. I had not heard of the engagement, so I suppose the affair was arranged and got over at the usual speed. But how do you come to be interested about the Chumleighs?"

Sir Wilfrid's curiosity was so much excited by the apparent anomaly of any relations between people of such widely-parted worlds as those of the Chumleighs and John Sandilands respectively, and he expressed this sentiment so frankly, that John at once told him the truth. Esdaile was in the way of love confidences just then; first Dunstan's, and now Sandilands'! He listened to his friend's story with his usual hearty sympathy, and expressed very warm admiration of Miss Carmichael.

"Of course you understand, since you have the pleasure of Lady Rosa's acquaintance," said John, when he had concluded his simple narrative, "why it is that we keep it all dark for the present, and that so far from its being a breach of duty to her uncle, it is really the very best thing Julia can do in his interests. She is the greatest comfort——"

"Alleviation," suggested Sir Wilfrid.

"Well, alleviation, then, he has in his life, especially since Miss Chumleigh's marriage, and she simply could not stay in the house, if she opposed her openly."

"Certainly not," said Sir Wilfrid, with energetic assent.

"So—there it is, you see——" John Sandilands paused, and then resumed, with a touch of emotion, which became him very well: "And you also see the full extent of what you have done for me. I have always wished that you should know it; it seemed ungrateful to leave you ignorant of the so much larger share of my obligation to you."

Sir Wilfrid of course received this

acknowledgment with the guilty embarrassment of his class and nation, and got it over by a burst of congratulation, and a jesting remark, that John's remarkable resignation to the lot of a coffee-planter in Ceylon was not quite so mysterious in his eyes as it had been before the great secret was imparted to him.

Then they had a great deal to say about the fair cousins, and as for the Thorntons, Sir Wilfrid opined that it would be all right.

"You see," he said, with an air of great wisdom, "if one goes in for money, at the beginning, and there's lots of it, one doesn't get disappointed; but it's not so safe with love—at least, unless such a fellow as you, and such a girl as Miss Carmichael, are parties to the other kind of bargain," Sir Wilfrid hastened to add, with a confused consciousness that he had largely departed from the romantic standpoint of his recent utterances.

The last waking thought of Edward Dunstan that night was: "My darling, my darling, it has not been so very long to wait for me, after all!"

### SECRET SOCIETIES.

SECRET Societies, those parasites of the body politic, appear as inevitably under a repressive form of government as do the barnacles that cling to the battered hull of an old ship. Scourge and branding-iron, knout and stick, and even the heroic remedies of the hangman's noose and the headsman's double-handed sword, have failed utterly to keep down the obstinate growth of what despotic rulers very naturally consider as a noxious weed, to be rooted out, at any cost of toil or suffering. Mere discipline, mere brute force, will no more put down clandestine associations than the fetters of Xerxes could chain the blue waves of Hellespont.

The very first of these mystic orders of which history tells, the Egyptian priesthood, was no true Secret Society after all. It lacked the essential condition of such a hidden brotherhood, which is that those who belong to it should bear no badge or outward sign, to designate him as other than the bulk of the uninitiated around him. The hierophant of Egypt belonged to a jealous and powerful corporation, watchful over hoarded knowledge as a dragon over its buried treasure, but he no more dreamed of concealing his clerical character from the lay public, than does a modern professor attempt to ignore the

string of capitals which proclaims him a Fellow of the Royal or of the Geographical Society.

The Templars afford a curious instance of a wealthy community cruelly persecuted and despoiled under the pretext that they constituted a secret society, dangerous to the commonweal. The verdict of history acquits Jacques de Molay and his knights, and lays the blame on the greedy monarch and servile pope who first malign'd and then murdered them. Of the Brethren of the Rosy Cross nothing is really known. There may have been genuine Rosicrucians, but it is impossible to distinguish between the Order and the swarm of alchemists and Pseudomagi whose wordy jargon comes down to us by tradition.

The only real secret society that mediæval times could boast of was a local one—the terrible Vehm Gericht—whose free judges held their lawless courts at midnight, and whose awful sentence made oppressors quail even in the best-guarded keep, with drawbridge raised and closed portcullis, and crossbows and pikes ever ready to dispute the passage of the castle-gate. Only cruel wrongs, only the habitual denial of redress where the offender was noble, could have reconciled Rhenish Germany to the lynch law of the Holy Vehm; but, as it was, for some hundred years a sort of sanctity attached to the decision of its invisible tribunals which never belonged to the court of my lord abbot, or of the baron in his robberhold, or even of the mitred prince-bishop of Cologne or Mayence. At last the institution, well intended at the first, was perverted to private ends, and it fell.

Statesmen in the eighteenth century were greatly exercised in their minds—in Continental Europe at least—by two associations, widely different as to the objects they sought, and the modes by which they sought them—the Jesuits and the Freemasons. The former of these orders was voted by far the more dangerous, as it certainly had proved itself incomparably the more powerful and tenacious. Some of the stateliest wigs in Christendom were solemnly shaken, every day, over schemes for putting down the militant society that Ignatius Loyola had planted, like the dragon's teeth of Cadmus, in our midst. Pombal drove them from Portugal; Choiseul chased them out of France; the very pontiff launched bulls and briefs against them in Poland and China; while England threatened hemp to any Jesuit setting foot upon her shores; yet the

wealth and influence of the Order outlived the anger of pope and minister.

The followers of King Solomon were harder to catch, and more difficult to identify, than were their clerical rivals. Freemasons, however, were odious to the Church of Rome, never tolerant of gatherings exempt from ecclesiastical control; and the same influence which refused Christian burial to the stage-player Molière was employed, but ineffectually, for the destruction of lodges and provincial grands. It was not as a swindler, but as a suspected Freemason, that the arch-charlatan Cagliostro was imprisoned in the papal castle of St. Angelo, where, by some seeming irony of fate, he died a captive, just as the French troops began their march towards Rome. In our own land and time, no suspicion attaches to a society of which the heir to the crown is Grand Master, but in Belgium it is social and ethical ostracism to be credited with masonic ties; and in most Spanish cities, to point out a supposed Freemason, is to ensure his ill-usage at the hands of the rabble.

Napoleon once beaten down, and Europe placed in the leading-strings of the Holy Alliance, the popular discontent found expression in an extraordinary growth of secret societies. In Germany the press was muzzled, but the Tugendbund, or so-styled Union of Virtue, reared its formidable head, and cost many an anxious moment to Metternich and Nesselrode. Legions of Austrian whitecoats could not prevent the social system of North Italy from being honeycombed by the Carbonari. Peep o' Day Boys, Ribandmen, and, later on, the baleful brood of Molly Maguire, kept up a feeling of insecurity to life and property west of St. George's Channel. In crowded back streets of London, Bristol, Manchester, sedition smouldered, nor could successive Attorney-Generals or Treasury solicitors contrive to trample out the glowing embers.

Meanwhile two great associations, purely non-political, which have proved their vitality by existing till the present day, flourished undisturbed. Naples—the old unreformed Naples of rags and luxury, of chains and license—lived and lounged and laughed under the shadow of the Camorra. Few of the rare travellers who visited Palermo ever heard of the mighty robber-league of the Mafia, beneath the illicit sway of which Sicilians passed their lives. These twin systems of modified Thuggee were rather encouraged than otherwise by

the authorities under Bourbon rule. King Ferdinand, in especial, the "crowned lazzarone," as Muratists called him, knew the value of an organisation which put its price on everything, from a political assassination to an anti-Liberal crusade, like Cardinal Ruffo's in 1815, and which supplied spies and thieftakers to order. Another generation must pass before the market-folk of Naples can sell their fruit and fish with perfect equanimity, until the customary percentage of black-mail has been dropped into the ready palm of some confident agent of the all-powerful Camorra.

The Tugendbund constituted a serious source of danger to the powers that were in Germany. It had its heroes and martyrs, Staps and Sand, whose grimy portraits were visible through wreaths of tobacco-smoke wherever students met to discuss metaphysics and regicide over the pipe and the beer-glass. Its faithful children had done more than assassinate a Russian ambassador or fail in an attempt against the charmed life of Napoleon. Duels, libels, and lampoons, on one side, were answered by imprisonment, fine, and banishment on the other, until the intellectual life of the great divided nation seemed at cross-purposes with the Transparencies and Serenities that bore rule over duchies and grand duchies uncounted.

It was the old, old story of *Æsop's* fable, over again. The traveller, who hugged his cloak the tighter to his storm-lashed self in the midst of hail and wind, was easily tempted to throw it off under the hot rays of a noonday sun. Freedom, even comparative freedom, of speaking, writing, and printing, has reduced the dread Tugendbund to a mere legend, of which ex-police prefects and superannuated public prosecutors prattle to their grandchildren. The Carbonari have not, in free Italy, a tithe of their former power. More modern doctrines, and perhaps more perilous ones, have supplanted the old watchwords of conspirators, and a red-capped Jacobin of Robespierre's following might find himself quite unable to understand the oratory, or to fathom the drift, of an assembly of French, Spanish, or German malcontents of to-day.

To attribute the spread of modern socialism to the teaching of St. Simon, or the example of the *Père Enfantin*, is to assign more importance to the fine words of a few enthusiasts than the great deaf world of toilers is usually willing to grant to specious theories that in practice break

down deplorably. There has always been a large leaven of crude communistic feeling both in Germany and in Russia. The Peasants' War in mediæval Germany, and many a fierce, ill-conducted outbreak in the czar's overgrown empire, were distinct struggles to set up a tribal system of common right in the place of fief and lordship. The Russian Mir, the South Slavonic Goritza, survivals of an extinct type of human hive, remain as schools of rude, but practical, socialism.

The three chief among the subversive societies of the present day are undoubtedly the International, the Russian fraternity of Nihilists, and the Omladina, the branches of which spread from Bessarabia into Bulgaria on the south, and Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia on the west, and which may be reckoned as an offshoot or imitation of its northern neighbour. Carthagina, and the Paris Commune, have proved the destructive powers of the International; but its aims are industrial, not agrarian, and the antagonist with which it pants to measure its strength is not property, but capital. Given, a system under which state factories should allot short hours, frequent holidays, and enormous pay, to the workmen under its control, and it would signify little to the International Society whether the needful bread, meat, and vegetables were produced by serfs or by freemen.

The vast association of the Nihilists is more comprehensive in its aims, and more thoroughgoing in its principles, than were even the Anabaptists of Leyden, or the Levellers and Fifth Monarchy Men, who fought and marched, under protest, in Cromwell's army. Their simple desire is to make a clean sweep of all human institutions, and to take their chance of what may follow. Only give them leave to destroy, and reconstruction may prove practicable, or may not; but in any case the world will be tilted out of its old grooves, and cut adrift from its old moorings. No more authority, whether of priest or king, of corporal or policeman. No more property, be it in an acre of potatoes or a princely demesne. Religion, learning, ambition, family life, are obstacles to so gigantic a change. Let all these go, say the fierce-eyed apostles of this gloomy creed, and then the new millennium of universal negation will run its course unchecked!

That Nihilism should number millions of Russians among its converts is not very surprising, since an ignorant peasantry,

slaves but yesterday, and used from infancy to a rude tribal communism, cannot be expected to grasp the truths of political economy. Nor need we wonder if counts and barons, clerks, captains, and civil functionaries, sincerely sick of a grinding despotism that meddles with everything, and mends nothing, should become fellow conspirators with those "black people," whose first act would be to improve noble, magistrate, and official, from off the face of Russia. Even educated Nihilists perhaps cherish a vague hope that some order might be evolved out of the chaos that is to come, and that the new system might be more to their taste than the rule of a stifling despotism.

The real ground for astonishment is that so many Germans, superior both in culture and in brain-power to their flat-faced neighbours beyond the Niemen, should have approved themselves pupils, only too apt, in that dark and dismal school which had its origin in Russia. Nothing but a violent reaction against drill, bureaucracy, and pedantry, can explain the sudden adhesion of so many myriads of thoughtful, hard-headed Teutons to a faith that is gilded by no bright hopes and surrounded by no roseate illusions, and that offers at best no loftier prospect of success than that of a set of mutinous urchins who should have achieved the triumph of tearing up their books and barring out the schoolmaster. Unfortunately, however, Germans sometimes act where Muscovites are content to dream, and an armed and aggressive sect of revolutionary zealots, ready to expound their doctrines with rifle and revolver, may at last compel society to an unwilling defence of its own first principles.

#### PERSONALLY CONDUCTED.

##### III.

My first experience of Paris is—a wonder that I have ever thought London noisy. I feel just a little "muzzy." The scramble of yesterday; the long, long night on the wet deck, with a nice cold drop from the soaked awning running down the nape of your neck if you did happen to close your eyes; the six hours' sea-breeze; the two or three hours' stroll about Dieppe, and then the long railway run through a country which, without presenting any very striking or picturesque feature, is so oddly unlike anything I have seen from a carriage-window before, have all combined to send me into a sort of half-dreamy state, in which sounds make more impression upon

me than sights. Indeed, for the last two or three hours my views of the passing scenery have been of the most intermittent character. Every now and then a louder grunt than usual from Dick's stout old lady on my left has aroused me to a sense that the weight upon my shoulder, under which I seem to have been toiling for the last week or two up never-ending pyramids of stepless ladders, is not my own left-at-home trunk of winter clothing, but that venerable dame's weary and slightly dishevelled head; occasionally the gentleman in the check suit has trampled heavily on my foot, with a "Beg pardon, miss," as he plunges wildly at the window in the vain hope of identifying some passing station; or the half-soothing, half-aggravating worry-worry of the wheels has ceased for a while, giving place to the less melodious tones of an exhaustive lecture upon American institutions in general, and presidential elections in particular, with which the intelligent and virtuous citizen in the black pants and hay-coloured goatee is enlightening the mind of an unlucky native, who has by some accident got in among us, and in a moment of ill-advised politeness has betrayed his acquaintance with what the lecturer terms the Amurrican tongue. But I am only finally aroused to the reality of things by the clang, clang, clang of the train as it at last rolls over the clashing turntables into the St. Lazare station. Then, with much shouting and shaking, the old lady in her turn is, if not actually awakened, at least brought to a state of somnambulism, and has her bonnet retied, and her wig adjusted, with as much regard to symmetry as circumstances will allow; then the much-enduring Frenchman takes advantage of the moment when his instructor turns to recover his stove-pipe hat, and vanishes, with a whispered "Mon Dieu!" And Dick is so busy looking after the old lady and her pretty companion, that he is rather obliged than otherwise to the little horror in the check suit, who, with an eager "Allow me, miss!" tramples this time on both my feet in his polite anxiety to be out first, and as he lugs me after him, bestows upon me an insinuating smile and a squeeze from his hot thick fingers, which make mine tingle with an ungrateful desire for a brief but intimate acquaintance with his big red ears. Then the polite little wretch scrimmages with me for my unlucky valise, and is horribly disgusted when Dick, who is already loaded like a pack-horse with the old lady's

belongings, thrusts his own bag into his hand instead, and as I bear away my valise in triumph, and stumble along the platform, ticket in mouth, like a well-intentioned, but insufficiently-trained little dog, I hear behind me a muttered protest: "Oh come! I say now! 'ang it all!"

And so we make our way past the terrible functionary who is perpetually reiterating, in a severe tone of military command, the imperative order, "Ouvrez vos billets!" but who, at a still more imperatively uttered reply from a stalwart mossoc just in front of me of "Ouvrez vous-même, vous avez deux mains!" fortunately collapses, and replaces my little green book in my mouth, as politely as if I had been an actual human being. Then step by step we fight our way, baggage and all, down a couple of hundred yards or so of steep street, make a wild dash through the swarm of jogging, jumbling, jingling vehicles meandering irresponsibly all over the wide Place du Havre, and find ourselves at last in the narrow little entrance passage of our hotel, where the proprietor and the shepherd are already comparing notes and counting heads, and where a slightly dilapidated map of Gaw's Tours in Central Mesopotamia hangs opposite a carefully framed and glazed request, from the master of the house, that "visitors will not go out or drink with" the too convivial waiters of this hospitable establishment!

I am still speculating in my own mind as to the class of visitor to whom this caution can be addressed, and mentally elaborating a fancy sketch of Dick and Mr. Neville hobnobbing with a waiter, when my turn comes to be introduced to my room, and I stumble wearily up the winding staircase which leads to my allotted apartment. Not a bad little oven when we do reach it at last, but oh! so hot, and with such a funny "baked" smell about it, as though the last inhabitant had been left in it too long, and had dried up. I almost expect to see his shrivelled remains upon the tiny bed, and make a frantic rush at the window, with which I struggle vainly for some time, till suddenly I give the fastening a quite unconscious tug in the right direction, and the whole thing flies open with a crash, very nearly depositing me on the thick hot carpet specially provided in consideration of English tastes, and letting in the full rush of the Paris roar.

Roar! That is a very inadequate expression. London can roar and rumble, too, especially in those streets which, like the great cross thoroughfare on which my

window opens, are paved with the good old-fashioned big square stones. But the roar and the rumble are only the basis or background of the Parisian clamour. The mere cracking of whips constitutes a little Babel in itself; the yells of enterprising merchants of peaches, and dolls, and cooling drinks, and baby balloons, might alone, one would think, suffice to give a very fair idea of a revolution; whilst as for bells, Mr. Irving might be taking an open-air benefit all day, and at least half the night. I sit and look out upon the turmoil and the din, forgetful even of the coal-dust upon my face, till I hear a well-known voice enquiring in the familiar accent of Stratford-atte-Bowe for Newmero so-and-so, and presently Dick is adding to the tumult by hammering briskly at the door, with the announcement that table-d'hôte has been ready ever so long; and that if I don't look sharp, I shan't get any dinner. Whereon I rush vehemently at the tiny basin, remove at top-speed as much of the mineral wealth of la belle France as the rather short allowance of water suffices to dissolve, and by the time the "rosbif" of old England is making its progress round the long table, I am fairly established in the vacant chair reserved for me at Dick's side, in the skylighted courtyard which serves us as a dining-room.

I am bound to admit that in its present guise of a thick round section of meat, as like as possible in size and shape to a "bottom" rusk, I should not have recognised that national dish had not the waiter, seeing me hesitate, affably pressed it upon me with the assurance, "that is rosbif, you will eat rosbif of course." So I eat my rosbif and find it tough, and by-and-by, my affable waiter thrusts another dish over my shoulder, rich, black, and blazing with pale blue flame, with the announcement that this is plompudang, and that, of course, I shall partake of plompudang. But plompudang, with the thermometer at ever so many hundreds in the shade, is too much even for my patriotism; and, at the risk of incurring, in my affable waiter's eyes, the stigma of imposture, I actually finish my dinner without indulging in that national dish, with which, as mossoc well knows, no real English meal would be considered complete. And so we get to the fowl and salad, a very much happier combination, in my humble opinion, than the English salad and cheese, and dinner has come to an end, and the older inhabitants of the hotel disperse to their various en-

gagements; and we, the new comers, cluster round our shepherd, eagerly demanding hints for the disposal of our evening. I perch myself on a corner of the table, safely screened by Dick's broad shoulders, and watch. Poor shepherd! If nature ever intended you for a model of human patience, assuredly Lavater was not one of her prophets. Yet Job himself might take a lesson to-night, and Job had only four friends instead of forty. A solemn gentleman in spectacles wishes to know the exact difference, if any, between the Français and the Palais Royal. The gentleman from Glasgow is in a hurry, as he means to walk to the "Odeon," and will be obliged by the shepherd's affording him, as quickly as possible, precesse instructions as to the route. The lady who has brought her daughters for the benefit of their accent (!) is, above all things, anxious that this desirable end should not be achieved at any risk to their morals, and thinks it would perhaps be as well if Mr. Dorling would just give a brief résumé of the performances at the various theatres with critical remarks, frowning ungratefully upon the facetious young gentleman in the check suit, who backs up the suggestion with an "'Ear! 'ear! Dorling's c'rect card!" A distinguished tourist from New York is chiefly anxious to know whether the citizens of Paris have anything to equal Wallack's. Uncommon one-horse concerns our London theatres was, and if there wasn't nothing better this side the water, he reckoned he'd just stroll up to the Elysian Fields, and see what the Variety Theatres there was like. An unprotected damsel of forty or so, with pleading dark eyes and vivacious manner, modestly hints that perhaps Mr. Dorling himself is going somewhere, and playfully rebukes that much-enduring man for lack of gallantry, when he informs her that, having left Geneva for London three days since, and spent all the intervening nights in railway carriages, he proposes to devote the coming evening to a refreshing of his reminiscences of bed. "Bed be 'anged," says the irrepressible checks, who, as Dick stoops to pick up something, catches sight of me in my ambush. "You're not thinking of bed, miss, I 'ope?" I assure him that I am already on my way to that despised retreat, and as Dick resumes the perpendicular, and shuts me in again, the young gentleman retires, proclaiming his intention of spending the night at "Mabbill." Whereupon I suggest to Dick a little stroll

on the boulevards, of which we have heard so much, and the old lady who fell fast asleep at least once over her plompudang having already retired and carried off her young friend with her, Master Dick is once more at my disposal, and we wander out under the direction of our never-failing shepherd, down the roaring Rue du Havre and across the somewhat modified tumult of the Boulevard Hausmann, into the comparative quiet of the Rue Auber, and so by the gigantic opera-house—where each triplet of gas-lamps is surmounted by a huge electric moon, turning the flames that were so brilliant only a few steps back into mere red-brown smears upon the cold white light, that makes the whole wide place almost as bright as day—out on to the broad pavement of the Boulevard des Capucines.

Broad, but by no means too broad for the crowd that throngs them, and through which we saunter between the long rows of leafy trees, whispering and shimmering in the bright gaslight and the brilliant fronts of the cafés, each with its little colony of iron tables and cane chairs, where mossos and his visitors—almost as many visitors, it would seem, to-night as mossos—are sipping their coffee, or their bock, or their sugared water, or that mysterious green liquid which seems to require mixing after the fashion of a juggling trick—the little glass which contains it being placed inside the empty tumbler, and the water trickled slowly upon it, till all the clear dark-green liqueur has been floated out, and the tumbler is filled with an opaque opal-coloured liquid, not altogether unsuggestive of soapsuds. So fascinating is the scene that Dick and I wander on, quite forgetting to be tired, past the Vaudeville, with its odd opening right in a projecting corner, seeming as if it were all door and staircase, with no theatre behind at all; past the Gymnase, where the audience is rushing out, at the end of an act, and clamouring for its open-air entr'acte of coffee and cigarette; past the two handsome old gates of St. Denis and St. Martin, that have long since retired from business, and content themselves with ornamentally blocking up the roads to which they once afforded access; past the Porte St. Martin Theatre, where the entr'acte is just over, and a tremulous little bell is hurrying the audience back to their seats before the curtain shall rise again; and on and on still farther, always with the crowd, and the trees, and the glittering lights, and the gay kiosques, and the

blazing cafés, till we find ourselves at the Château d'Eau, where broke out the first little squall of the storm that was ultimately to swallow up the Third Empire, and where fresh vistas of brilliant boulevard open before us illimitably in half-a-dozen different directions; and I suddenly awake to the remembrance that we have not been in bed since the night before last, and have a long day's sight-seeing before us to-morrow.

"Tired, old fellow?" asks Dick, as I hang heavily on his arm.

"Oh Dick!" I answer, "that is no word for it."

Dick suggests a cab. The idea is only too fascinating, but I have doubts from an economical point of view. I have got, at least, one practical "hint" from my lady adviser's little green book, and that is, that the cost of a short course is two francs, and of a longer one, two and a half. This will be assuredly a longer one, and two francs and a half is a lot of money.

"Bosh!" says Dick. "Don't believe she knows anything about it."

And sure enough, as we step into our tiny and tidy little brougham, the driver politely hands us a little yellow slip of paper, which proves to contain the tariff of his charges, and from which, at the very next lamp-post we pass, Dick triumphantly proves to me that the maximum charge for the longest course we can take inside Paris is one franc and a half! And the next minute, as it seems to me, I wake up from my nap on Dick's shoulder and find myself at the hotel, and stumble up the winding stairs in a manner hardly, I fear, suggestive of the very harmless way in which my evening has been spent.

Is it the next morning, or the morning of that day six weeks, that Dick comes thundering at my door, with an energetic enquiry as to whether I mean to sleep out the rest of the journey, and a declaration that I shall assuredly be charged extra for the use of the bed? Certainly, it seems to me as though I had left home a month ago at least. The rumbling, and the clattering, and the shouting, and screaming, and whip-cracking, and bell-ringing, and all the rest of it seem to come as naturally as the great blazing sun itself—such a sun as does not often come pouring in at my bedroom-window out by Shepherd's Bush. However, be it hours, or weeks, or years, I have no time to go into chronological questions now, for it is close upon nine o'clock already, and at ten precisely we are to start upon a four-in-hand excursion through what the New York gentleman

calls the Elysian Fields and the Wood of Bullong, and away by St. Cloud—which he pronounces frankly *Anglicé*, as though it were going to rain—and so to Versailles and the great and little "Tryanon." I am a little startled when, after dashing through our breakfast, we make our way to the door and find awaiting us, not our four-horse coach, as we had anticipated, but a miscellaneous collection of pleasure-vans, and, at the head of these, a huge five-horse car, not quite so gorgeous in the way of gilding and allegorical painting, but in all other respects the very "moral" of that in which the travelling circus-band used to make their triumphal entry into our village ever so many years ago. Are we really going about in a long procession, headed by a band?

It is rather a relief when I see the gentleman in the goatee clambering to the airy elevation of the box-seat, protesting the while against any comparison of such an equipage as this with the stages of his native land. He, at all events, performs upon no instrument but his own national trumpet. And soon the whole huge machine is filled; and the vans, each two-storied are, fast taking in their passengers; and our old lady, after a desperate but polite struggle for the upper region of our van, gives it up, and subsides into a corner of the lower compartment, whence she emerges on our arrival at Versailles a living image in terra-cotta; indeed, as Dick observes, if cotta means baked, as I believe it does, very much cotta indeed. However, she is a good-natured old lady, and does not insist upon her pretty niece coming down to be smothered with her. So, Nelly is put under Dick's charge; and the old lady confides herself, and her wraps, and her smelling-bottles, and fans, and so forth, to the tender care of the solemn gentleman in spectacles, who appears to have fathomed the difference between the Théâtre Français and that of the Palais Royal, and is now intent upon the question why, in this frivolous city, that instructive institution the Polytechnique should have been struck out of the list of amusements.

We make an imposing spectacle as, after a good deal of pushing and scrambling, to say nothing of a small amount of actual wrangling on the subject of priority of choice, we all settle at length into our places, and rumble off at a jog-trot in the direction of the Arc de Triomphe. To give more *éclat* to the procession, our coachmen are got up in true orthodox costume, with varnished hat, scarlet waist-

coat, and that wonderful little blue bob-tailed jacket, with red cuffs and collars, and ever so much too short in the waist. Almost everyone pauses and turns to admire us, as we pass through the stately streets of the fashionable quarter that lies between us and the "Elysian Fields," and as I scramble to my lofty perch on the upper story, under the admiring gaze of the little crowd of flaneurs that has gathered to see us off, I hear for the first time an explanatory phrase with which, during the next fortnight, I am to become tolerably familiar—"Un parti de Gawks."

I am not so disappointed as some of our party evidently are, when we finally move off without that parting cheer with which we should certainly have been despatched upon our way by any similar little crowd in London. I suppose royal personages and successful ambassadors, and so forth, get accustomed to this sort of thing, even if it does not come to form an essential feature of the programme, as in the case of one of those grand van processions to Hampton Court or Epping Forest, to which our present expedition has so decided a resemblance. But it has an odd effect at first. However, it must be admitted that, from our post up here upon the roof, we get a capital view of the gay streets and brilliant gardens, so unlike the cramped smoky old London squares in their sunny breadth and freshness, and when the first feeling of being, as it were, on view, wears off, the drive becomes really enjoyable. Even Checksuit, whose night's amusements do not seem to have been of a refreshing character, and who yawns vigorously and blinks his pink eyelids incessantly all the way to the Arc de Triomphe, "pulls himself together" under the influence of the bright sun and fresh breeze, and remarks approvingly upon the width of the road, and the snugness of the semirural "cribs" by which it is bordered.

Here a small contretemps arises. We have got out our maps of course, those of us at least who are possessed of these aids to losing one's way, and so far we have made out our route along the Boulevard Hausmann easily enough. But where are we now? The American gentleman maintains that we are in Empress Avenue, and stands by his opinion with characteristic steadfastness. The gentleman from Manchester, on the other hand, between whom and the former there is still smouldering a certain amount of hostility, arising, I fancy, out of a rather animated discussion on the Canadian Fisheries

Award at yesterday's table-d'hôte, maintains with equal insistence that there is no such place in his map. To which his antagonist replies, that if a gent's eyes are not altogether first-class, he'd better carry about a map a bit bigger than a half-dollar bill. Checksuit, who takes a lively interest in the discussion, suggests Shepherd's Bush, and finding this facetious solution of the question, which has a great success with the majority of the audience, unacceptable to the sterner minds of the two controversialists, recommends a reference to "Old Sticking-plaster," by which our ingenuous youth means the driver, on whose shiny black hat he forthwith proceeds to rap with his little cane to attract his attention.

"I say, guv'nor; where are we—eh? you savey."

Coachee shakes his head, cracks his whip, and informs us in French that he has no English. But Checksuit is not so easily to be baffled. He takes to pantomime; points along the road, and mustering up all his French, demands once more:

"Where are we, eh—you savey? Où?—you know, eh?"

Coachee follows the direction of his interrogator's finger, points in his turn along the road with his whip, and giving the latter another crack, replies briefly:

"Le Bois."

"Oh, bother the Bwaw! We know all about that. What's this road—this what d'ye call 'em—roo, you know—roo—roo?" and he points downward to the roadway more energetically than ever.

The next moment, with a long pull at the reins, and a curious inarticulate sound from his throat, even more suggestive of a rough Channel passage than the "Eegh! eegh!" with which he has been urging his steeds on their not particularly wild career, coachee has brought his huge machine to a stand, has tumbled all in a heap from the box, and is anxiously inspecting the wheel! Perhaps, on the whole, when we realise the blunder, and an involuntary burst of laughter leads poor coachee to the evident belief that he has been deliberately hoaxed, it is just as well for some of us that we do not understand much French. Certainly it seems to be, as our American friend observes approvingly, "an all-fired fine language for swearing in;" and poor coachee swears in it for the next mile or two with unabated fluency; thence falling into a fit of silent sulks, from which he refuses to be aroused, for the rest of the journey.

And now we are fairly in the famous

Bois, crashing our way through the overhanging boughs, which show as little trace of siege or revolution as any other part of this wonderful Paris, and through gaps in which, when a grave anxiety for the fate of our hats and bonnets, to say nothing of our heads, allows us a moment's respite in which to look round, we catch glimpses of little lakes and cascades, and all the other delights of this luxurious promenade. And presently we emerge again into the broad open road, and find ourselves on the edge of a tolerably smooth oblong lawn, which, with its railed-in track and the elaborate stands, "grand" and otherwise, on the opposite side, unmistakably proclaims itself a racecourse. Here the great "band-carriage" in front pulls up, and the van that follows closes up as near as possible to it, and the rest range alongside, and a little man in black, who has been balancing himself on the back step of the band-carriage, till the dust from the hind wheels has qualified him, so far as the outer man is concerned, to play the part of the statue in Don Giovanni, jumps to the ground, places himself in the middle of the narrow open space between the two rows of carriages, takes off his hat with an eloquent flourish, bows decorously and profoundly to the honoured occupants of each separate vehicle, and begins:

"Ladies and jentelmen! I have mosh pleasure to see you all here zis day. Zis, ladies and jentelmen, is——"

But at this moment comes up a dashing four-horse drag, which rattles past us in regular mail-coach style, while the driver points us out with his whip for the edification of his passengers, most of whom stand up in their seats to have a good stare at us as they pass. This, our orator interrupts himself to drawl, is the four-in-hand excursion of the opposition establishment of Messrs. Cooze; explaining in reply to Checksuit's unpatriotic remark that "it's a jolly sight spicier turn-out than ours," that Messrs. Cooze charge a much higher price for their excursions. However, the gentleman from New York opines that, "at two dollars a head, Messrs. Gawk ought to be able to fix the thing up tolerable handsome;" and the other gentleman from Manchester, for once agreeing with him, makes a rapid pencil calculation on the back of an old invoice, showing upon our single van, with its modest establishment of one man and four horses, a weekly return of sixty guineas. But we have paid our dollars, and all we care about now is to get our enjoyment out of them,

so there is a general little murmur of "H'sh!" "Order!" and so forth, and we bend our attention once more upon our lecturer, who proceeds to inform us how that this is the famous course of Longchamps, where the race for the great Prize of Paris is run; how that yonder is the windmill of Longchamps; and yonder again the remains of the celebrated abbey, where the ladies of court used to retire to make their salut; and away on the hill there to the right the great fort of Mont Valérien; and away among the woods on the other hill to the left the ruins of the Palace of St. Cloud, which was destroyed by the fire from guns of the great fort, and which he will shortly have the melancholy pleasure of showing us; and finally, how he hopes that we shall have a pleasant day, and enjoy ourselves ver mosh, and go home and say what a good guide we have had.

Wherewith the eloquent little Commendatore makes one more sweeping circular bow to the company at large, and hops up upon his dusty perch again. And Checksuit cries "'Ear! 'ear!" and there is a little round of applause, effectively strengthened by the universal whip-cracking of the whole convoy as the procession gets itself under way again, following on the track of the dashing drag of Messrs. Cooze, which, laughing to scorn such plebeian institutions as roadside lectures, is already out of sight on its way to St. Cloud.

"Nevare mind, jentelmen!" shouts the Commendatore cheerfully across our horses' heads. "I sall show you all zat zey sall show you, and you sall say——"

But what we shall say we learn not, for the temporary agreement between New York and Manchester has come to an abrupt termination, and vehement issue has been joined upon the question which army it was that was in possession of Valérien when St. Cloud was destroyed. Manchester stoutly insists that it was the Prussian artillerymen who shelled the palace from there, whilst New York as stoutly maintains that neither during nor after the siege was any Prussian soldier ever in Valérien at all. And so we rattle through the gay little town of Boulogne, whence, and not from that other Boulogne "sur mer," which has been hitherto our only acquaintance of that name, the famous Bois takes its title, and where preparations are going on for a forthcoming fête and fair upon a scale which very nearly determines Checksuit to abandon the party forthwith, and "go in for the roundabouts and kiss-in-the-ring," or whatever the

French equivalent of those elegant pastimes may prove to be.

Before he has quite made up his mind to desert us, however, the flags, and the shows, and the garlands have been left behind, and we are just drawing near St. Cloud, where, in a brief space farther, we pull up opposite a small restaurant, at the door of which the opposition drag is already standing, and set off on foot up the steepish hill which leads to the palace. Here the knotty point as to Valérien is referred to the guide, and as both disputants turn out to have been in the wrong—the bombardment of St. Cloud being declared to have been the work of the French themselves, whilst at the surrender the fort was of course occupied by the Prussians—each party is at liberty to consider himself as having had the best of it, and comports himself proudly accordingly. So there is a temporary truce, and we climb the hill, and pause at the top, to regain our breath and admire the wide panorama of the city and its environs, that lies stretched out before us at the foot of the almost precipitous slope, topped here by the ivy-covered parapet of a broad terrace.

And here I notice a very peculiar feature in this wonderful city of Paris. If there be any one kind of view to which, more than to any other, distance may almost always be said to lend enchantment, it is surely that of a great town. One gets almost tired, in reading books of travel, of hearing how fairylike and lovely such and such a town looks as you approach it from the green hill, or craggy mountain, or the blue waters of lake or bay; and how, as you enter it, the illusion passes away, and nought but dirt, and squalor, and shabbiness remains. Certainly London from, say, the water-towers of the Crystal Palace or the top of Highgate Hill, affords a very much more picturesque prospect than the nearer view from the Borough or Tottenham Court Road. Now with Paris it is exactly the reverse. Anything handsomer or finer in its way than the magnificent streets, and avenues, and boulevards of that most intensely full-dressed of cities, it would, I think, be exceedingly difficult to imagine. From the terrace of St. Cloud it looks almost shabby. Why this should be so I leave to more learned critics to decide; as also the question raised by a violently anti-Prussian member of our party how it was, if the palace here at St. Cloud really was set on fire by the Valérien shells, and not by its Prussian occupants when forced to abandon it, the

shells themselves have left no other trace upon the walls? and how it is that these shells, while leaving the building itself almost untouched, managed to knock to pieces, with three exceptions, every one of the, I forget how many, dozens of statues which ornamented the garden?

Meanwhile our energetic little Commendatore, who has the whole history of the place at his finger-ends, pushes on briskly, pulling up at each point of interest, and waiting, hat in hand, till the straggling crowd gathers round him once more in a compact and attentive ring. Then, in plaintive tones, he rehearses to us the past glories of the magnificent palace, the splendour of its decorations, the gorgeousness of its furniture, its varied history under Bourbon and Bonaparte, and finally, and with special emphasis upon the fact which he evidently understands will be the most interesting of all to us, that her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria preferred it to Versailles. And so we make our way to Versailles itself—to the Trianons, where our little guide altogether ignores the later lights of history, placing the left-handed queen of the old Grand Monarque in precisely the same category as the too notorious charmers of Louis the Fifteenth; and where his plaintive record of the various personages by whom the different apartments have been occupied, and the periods to which their furniture belongs, is interspersed with serio-comic moral reflections on the manners and customs of our forefathers and their kings, which delight us hugely, and delightfully modify the otherwise somewhat monotonously historic flavour of the entertainment.

Then, with a delicious glimpse of the grand collection of glorious gilt gingerbread in which post-revolutionary kings and emperors have gone their way to be married, and christened, and crowned, and so forth—the old historic coaches were all destroyed with the monarchy they had served—we make our way to our luncheon, which our little guide has wisely warned us will be very bad, and which, to do it justice, fully realises his prediction; and so back to the grand palace itself. Shall I get my Murray and "crib," as Dick suggests, an authentic account of its glories, or shall I trust to my own memory and the plaintively comic account of our admirable little guide? On the whole, perhaps I had better do neither. Certainly the principal image that remains to me of our two hours' tramp through these stately gardens—a little neglected

now—and those vast halls with their historic pictures, and still more historic memories is, not the Grand Monarque, nor the Little Corporal, nor the noble "Austrian" and her devoted guards, nor even that citizen king, second father to the mighty pile whose grotesque image passes so oddly every now and then across the phantasmagoric mirror. These, or the first three of them, are the associations of the Versailles of my dreams, and terribly romantic and sentimental some of these associations are. The one central figure of the Versailles of our to-day's scramble, is our little dusty, indefatigable, irrepresible guide. And there is nothing whatever romantic or sentimental about him. Perhaps, if we had come to sit where Marie Antoinette sat, and close our eyes for a moment to listen with her to the quick breathing of her frightened children, and the swelling roar of the advancing mob, our little rattling, pattering, serio-comic Figaro of the Faubourg St. Antoine—for he is more like Figaro than the Commendatore, after all—might be a little out of place. But Manchester, and New York, and Islington have not come for any such unexpected purpose. We have come to count the windows and appraise the furniture; to make each our own original jokes upon the eccentric ceremonies of the king's "levy" and "couchey;" to compare life in the long galleries of Versailles, with life in the almost equally long galleries of our own familiar Bethlehem, moralising profoundly thereanent upon the madness of kings; above all—so far as the English contingent among us is concerned—to compare the great water-works with those of our own Crystal Palace.

And for all these requirements Figaro is simply perfect. He gives us facts, just such facts as he knows we shall appreciate, and he gives them in a manner which adds tenfold to our appreciation. To the most idiotic of our remarks and questions, he has a repartee as promptly ready as though the same remark were made and the same question asked him—as indeed it very likely is—every day at precisely the same spot. And every repartee is safe for a laugh, if not a round of actual applause. As he closes his rapid sparrow's-eye view of the history and dimensions and pictures and furniture of each successive room, he makes his little bow and whisks off to the next with a neat little "exit speech" which never fails of its effect, and over which in time we begin to chuckle before-

hand in safe anticipation of the inevitable laugh. If the enterprising Messrs. Gawke had had a guide made to order, they could not have turned out one more admirably suited to the purpose. For my part, I am very sure that Le Notre and Mansard, and even the Grand Monarque himself, will fill in my memory but very secondary rôles among the creators of Versailles; and as we ramble homewards through Sèvres—regaling ourselves as we pass with an instructive view of "the exterior of the celebrated porcelain manufactory"—the rumbling wheels, and the tramping hoofs, and the jingling bells all unite in one triumphant chorus of "Ah, bravo, Figaro! Bravo! Bravissimo! A te fortuna non mancherà!"

### FROM BANNS TO MATRIMONY.

CONSIDERING the frequency with which it is studied, it is rather strange that the marriage service should be, of all the services of the Church of England, the one least understood by the people. We speak of country people especially, though the remark might be more widely applied. No doubt this arises in part from the difficulty which the uneducated experience in comprehending the language itself of the prayer-book; in part also from the state of nervousness into which the near approach of matrimony generally throws men, and sometimes even women. But be the causes what they may, the fact is certain that the journey from banns to marriage is on the whole very fruitful in incidents, and not the less so because it often happens that, like other journeys, it is begun and never finished; or is persisted in to the end, when every consideration of prudence would urge its being abandoned.

But let us see how the rustic bride and bridegroom set about the matter.

The first step of making application for the banns to be published is not without its perplexities to them. Seldom have they any idea as to what information they ought to supply to the clergyman, who is accordingly not unfrequently left to ascertain most of the necessary facts for himself. Here is one of the common forms of application. "Sir, I wish to be asked to-day, Sunday;" this, with merely the names of the two parties attached, is all the information vouchsafed. Others adopt the imperative mood, and issue the following brief order which they hand to the clerk before service: "Publish the bands" (usually so spelt) "of marriage between Joe Green and Ellen Brown;" and on one occasion the

following was received, the writer having apparently confounded his office in the matter with that of the minister: "I publish the bands of marriage between John Bennett Batchlor and Elizabeth Ann Jones Spinsteress." Then we have the man, who, studiously withholding the required facts as to condition (i.e. whether bachelor or spinster, &c.) and places of abode, kindly volunteers the statement that he was twenty-five last birthday, and his Lucy twenty-one. Or else, he perhaps adds, in a postscript, "To be called three times." We have heard of one, whose request, or rather direction, ran thus: "To be called twice;" as though, feeling it to be a matter entirely for his own decision, and being satisfied himself with that number of publications, he wished to spare the clergyman unnecessary trouble. Another wrote as follows: "Sir, the undersigned are desirous of being proclaimed in your church on Sunday next," a request indicative of the sincerest desire for publicity of whatever kind. Here is an instance in which the aspirant to wedded bliss never got beyond the banns, and as it illustrates the remark made above as to the journey towards matrimony stopping short halfway occasionally, it shall be given in extenso. A certain rector, on entering his vestry one Sunday morning, was thus addressed by his clerk: "If you please, sir, that man as was published last Sunday, don't want to be put up no more."

"You mean the soldier, whose banns have been published once; but why not?"

"Well, sir, the colonel's lady says he's not to be married, so I suppose," he added dryly, "she's the colonel."

"But what does the man say?"

"Well, sir, he didn't say no different."

"Very well, then I'll stop the publication."

When service was over, the lady in question came into the vestry to explain. "Oh! Mr. F., I'm so glad you left off publishing that man's banns, for he has no business to think of marrying."

"Indeed, and why not?"

"Why, because he has not enough to keep a wife upon; and, besides, what do you think he said to me? I sent for him as soon as ever I heard what he was about, and I said to him: 'Sullivan, what can you be thinking of? What have you got to keep a wife on?' 'Nothing, ma'am,' he said. 'Then, how on earth could you go and ask that woman to marry you?' 'Oh! ma'am,' he answered, with an air of

injured innocence, 'I didn't do that; she asked me.'"

One would have supposed that this man's prospects of matrimony were at an end; but not so, for scarce a month had elapsed when the clerk appeared with: "If you please, sir, that man what Mrs. M. stopped wants to be put up again."

"Oh! oh! then the woman has been too much for him after all."

"It's not the same woman, sir."

And the worst of it was there was no Mrs. M. to interfere this time, for she was away; however, fate was still unpropitious to the would-be bridegroom, for scarcely had his name been entered in the book, when the clerk came hurrying in. "Have you put that man's name down, sir?"

"Yes, just this moment."

"Ah!" in an accent of regret; "he don't want to be put up now."

"Why not?"

"The woman won't 'ave him."

This was his last appearance. Probably the double misfortune of losing both the woman that had asked him, and the one he had asked, was too much for him, for he never applied again.

It must be said, however, that such accidents as this seldom happen to the soldier; he is generally at a premium in the matrimonial market, and if he goes no farther on the road to wedlock than the first stage, it is most commonly of his own deliberate intention. If the object be to satisfy a woman's claims, and keep her quiet, a shilling spent in the publication of banns is an inexpensive as well as certain way of doing it. There can be nothing for her to complain of when once that step has been taken, and perhaps before the parties are "outasked" the faithless swain may have been ordered elsewhere with his regiment. There are some women, though, who are so resolved to marry that they are quite sure to catch someone, if not the one they at first intended; witness the following story related by a clergyman to whom it happened. He had married a woman of uncertain age to a young soldier from the adjacent garrison, and after entering their names in the register, asked the man whether he wished for a marriage certificate, whereupon the bride thrust herself forward and said, "Yes, I shall require a certificate," evidently regarding it as a sort of conveyance to her of the man she had succeeded in obtaining. Armed with this title-deed she marched off with her property, and then the clerk threw this

additional light on her conduct. "She meant to be married, sir," he said, "she did. Why, when she came to me to arrange for its being to-day, I told her there was no time unless she got a licence, and that would be expensive. 'I don't care,' she says, 'what it costs me; I will be married this time. Why,' she says, 'I've missed twice afore. The first time, I had the banns put up and all, and then found the man had a wife already! Then I was outasked with another, and fixed the day, and came to church with my friends, and—he never come! So this time, I won't be disappointed.'" Perseverance certainly does wonders; but the curious part of the affair was that the bride going next day into the barrack square, and being asked to pick her husband out of some dozen or so of soldiers of the same regiment, didn't know him.

What is the use, one may ask, of attempting to stop people from committing matrimony, when once their minds are set on it? And yet clergymen are continually being asked to stop them, and constantly endeavour to do so, but without ever succeeding—at least, so far as we have been able to learn. If there could ever be any chance of success, it might be thought to exist in this well authenticated case from a country parish. There was a couple whose respective ages were forty-five and seventy. The latter of these was the lady. There was nothing against her character, unless the trifling circumstance of her having already had five husbands might be so considered. She called on the parson, and stated her wish to marry. Now, there was something against the man, and the reverend gentleman thought he had good reasons for dissuading the intending bride from marrying him. He told her that her intended had run away from his former wife some few months before, when she was on her death-bed, leaving her to be taken to the union; he also enlarged on the disparity of age; and, finally, on the difference of faith, for the man was a Roman Catholic. Her resolution did seem actually shaken; but by what? Not by his treatment of his first wife; that she treated very lightly—and who shall venture on such a point to contradict or dictate to a woman of five-husband experience? But when she heard that he was a Roman Catholic, she was really horrified. Nothing should induce her to take him if that were true. By next day, however, they had settled it between them that it wasn't, so she came

to renew the application to be married; and married she was, in a black satin bonnet and orange-flowers.

But, leaving for the moment these records of the more experienced in matrimonial affairs, let us take another glance at some of the stumbling-blocks which exist for the inexperienced in the marriage service. One of the greatest of these for the country bumpkin exists undoubtedly in the words, "with all my worldly goods I thee endow." He almost always boggles at the last word, and commonly renders it thus, "I, thee, and thou," with a conscious glance at his bride, himself, and the minister; nor is it, we believe, possible, even by frequent repetition, to induce him to alter this form of expression, if once he has committed himself to it. We recollect being present at one wedding where the bridegroom made the usual pause of indecision at the word endow, and finally said "endoo," whereupon, his best man, better informed than himself, gave him a tremendous dig in the ribs from behind, and said, with stern emphasis, "endow," evidently thinking that he was thus discharging one of the duties of his office. It is usually the case at a wedding that the bride, though she may betray symptoms of nervousness, is better acquainted with the service than the bridegroom is, and has her wits more about her. But this is not always the case, as the following instances will show. A certain clergyman had on one occasion two couples to unite, and having got through the ceremony of joining hands and putting on the ring with the first, was proceeding to do the same with the second; but when the time arrived at which the woman had to disengage her right hand from the man's, and take it again, in order to pronounce the words in which she would take him for her husband, she somehow became confused; it seemed to occur to her that having already given her right hand, there could be no necessity for giving it again, and so she presented her left. This mistake was gently corrected by the minister, who made her give her right; and then she lost her head completely. In an access of nerves which seemed irresistible, she gave alternately right and left in a series of quick jerks that lasted some seconds, and must have made it extremely difficult for the audience to preserve their gravity; indeed, the officiating clergyman confessed afterwards, that though he managed to keep his countenance at the moment, the

figure of this woman, spasmodically washing her hands in the air, suddenly came across his mind's eye at a later stage of the service, and nearly upset him while he was reading the last exhortation. This, and one now to be chronicled, are the only cases that have come to our knowledge where the woman failed to perform her part correctly, and no doubt they must be held to be of the nature of exceptions proving the rule to be as above stated. This last anecdote is extracted almost verbatim from the note-book of the clergyman who officiated on the occasion, and is as follows: "This morning I married a mariner named William B—— to Sarah C——, and I think I shall never forget it. The wedding party consisted of four persons; there being present, besides the bride and bridegroom, an elder mariner and his wife. A little confusion was occasioned at first, owing to the ancient mariner, in answer to my question, representing himself to be the bridegroom, but this was soon put right, and the real parties stood before me. All went on as usual up to the time when the woman had to say, 'I, Sarah, take thee, William;' when upon my telling her to take his hand and repeat after me, she exclaimed, to my great amazement, 'I can't.' 'Yes, you can,' observed the bridegroom. 'No, I can't say it,' repeated she. 'Come,' said I, preserving my gravity by an effort which surprised myself, 'cannot you say the words after me?' 'Oh no! I couldn't.' 'You can say it after him,' remonstrated William again. 'Oh no!' And now the female attendant mariner struck in in a sweet Irish brogue: 'Arrah! can't ye say it after the jantleman, dear?' with a stress on the jantleman which no italics can convey. No use at all—either she couldn't, or she wouldn't. The bridegroom apparently thought it was real incapacity, and that he had divined the true reason of her refusal, for he now suggested as a probable explanation, 'You see, sir, she can't neither read nor write; that's what it is.' There seemed at this point some danger of the conversation becoming general, so that I was obliged to request silence, and that I might be allowed to conduct the ceremony in my own way; for the elder mariner thought it time to put in his oar, which he did by winking one eye—the other was out—and observing with a jerk of his thumb towards the bride, 'Say it.' However, say it she could not, and as she was trembling all over, I began to think that all

might not be right; so I made her sit down, and questioned her and the whole party as to whether there existed any impediment to the marriage. Having at length satisfied myself that there did not, and that it was a pure case of nervousness, I enquired for salts or a smelling-bottle, but nothing of the kind was at hand—only a large nosegay, of doubtful freshness, which the female friend officiously thrust under the bride's veil, apparently under the impression that any smell would work a cure. Finding her by this time rather more composed, I thought I would try a little calm reasoning, and asked her whether she really meant to take William for her husband; and on her agreeing that she did, I further suggested that she might as well say so, and moreover, that nobody but herself could say it, and that if she didn't, she never would have him at all. Yielding at last to these arguments, she expressed her readiness to have another try, whereupon she stood up and managed to stumble through the necessary form of words, and the ceremony was completed. But my difficulties were not quite over. When we got into the vestry, the bridegroom signed his name in the register without making any difficulty, but all the rest of the party stoutly maintained that they could not write. I had not much doubt that this was true with respect to the two females, but I strongly suspected that my friend, the ancient mariner with the one eye, could write if he chose. 'Do you really mean to tell me,' I said, 'that you have never written your own name?' 'Well, sir,' he answered, 'I don't mean to say for what I have wrote my name—on a piece o' paper—but I shouldn't like to wentur in that 'ere book.' Could I do otherwise than excuse a man who showed such respect for my registers? So I let them affix their marks, and the signing being completed, I observed to the bride that now she had said the solemn words she must mind and keep to what she had said; which the bridegroom capped by saying, quite gravely, not jocosely, 'Yes, you've put your foot in it.' One last incident remains to be told; when they had one by one all filed out of the vestry, I observed the ancient mariner standing at the door, in a lingering sort of way, with his legs rather wide apart, and one hand half stretched out towards me. Instantly divining his wish, I advanced and shook hands with him; whereupon they all returned, one by one, and shook hands with me."

Such difficulties as these, if they are at all common—and it seems probable that among maritime populations, at any rate, they may be—must give the clergy more trouble than outsiders are aware of. In the case just related it must be allowed that the marriage fee was fairly earned. There is, however, one conclusion to which an examination of this subject has brought us, and that is, that it would be well if clergymen, in addition to their more important advice and instruction, were also to furnish their people with simple and careful explanations of the prayer-book, not only of the daily services, but the occasional ones as well. The road from banns to matrimony might thus, it is true, lose some of its incidental picturesqueness, but there would be no harm in making it plainer and clearer.

### AN ISLAND PRINCESS.

BY THEO. GIFT.

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

Is it not often astonishing how rapidly an acquaintance, when begun unconventionally, grows and increases in contradiction to our own wishes and prejudices; sometimes in spite of our own wills? It had been just like Keith Fenwick, so said his brother-officers, to seize upon the first moment of his leave on shore to go off for a long solitary ride over a country of which he knew nothing, instead of making acquaintance with the settlement and the hospitable inhabitants thereof; but, indeed, Keith Fenwick was not much like sailors in general. The second son of a wealthy baronet, with an independent income of his own derived from a deceased aunt; and only the feeble life of an invalid brother between himself and the succession to both title and property, he had entered the navy simply because his own inclinations happened to chime in with an old family tradition, which for three centuries had devoted the second son to the service of his monarch by land or sea. As he happened to have powerful friends, and no small interest at the Admiralty—though of course nothing is ever done by interest in this incorruptible little kingdom of ours—he had hitherto contrived to get appointed to good ships on pleasant stations, passing a good deal of his time in the Channel Squadron or the Mediterranean, and taking life altogether very easily, besides being a good deal run after by those mammas and chaperons who are usually wont to regard naval men as the worst and most dangerous of detrimentals.

It was this running after which had spoiled Keith. He had been so much petted at home, so much sought after abroad, so pestered with invitations, so smiled upon by young ladies, and haunted by maternal attentions, that he had grown to suspect a lure behind every pretty face, and a noose behind every hospitable offer; and to shun the society of young ladies as he might have done that of card-sharpers. His friends called him the woman-hater, and told a story of one girl whom he had really admired, but to whom he had never spoken again after an evening when she threw over his dearest friend, to whom she was engaged for the next waltz, that she might give the dance to him. In his own mind, he had nearly decided that he would never marry till he could find some woman so high in social rank and graces, that he need never suspect anything but pure unmixed love of having contributed to her acceptance of him.

At present he was second lieutenant of the *Parnassus*, under Admiral Sir George Keble, then in command of the South American Squadron; and had had his stoicism severely put to the test by the fascinations of the dark-eyed senoritas of Brazil and Uruguay; not to speak of sundry young ladies, daughters of English merchants settled in those parts, and who had seemed by no means disinclined to exchange their present prospects for those of the future Lady Fenwick, of Overton Hall and Crashfell Manor, Cumberland. Neither, however, had any chance. Keith's mother had made him promise that he would never bring her a foreign daughter-in-law; and against half-breeds, as he inwardly called the pretty daughters of Spanish mothers and English fathers, he had a prejudice of his own; so he contented himself with waltzing, and even flirting in a mild way, with the nicest and best-looking of both races, and was languidly indifferent when the hot weather set in, and the order was given to weigh anchor for that little English island in the centre of the South Atlantic, which serves as a kind of sanatorium for the British fleet, during the months when cholera and yellow fever stalk rampant over the sultry shores of the continent. There were sure to be plenty of women there as elsewhere, he thought, and of all women, colonial ones, with their loudness and vulgarity, their petty local scandals, their rococo finery, narrow-minded insularities and affectation of being above all things English, were to him more obnoxious than any others.

It was to get out of the reach of them all that he had started on that long ride which had come to so untimely an end; and it was quite in accordance with the perversity of fate that, having done so, he should fall in with Jean hiding herself among the rocks for a similar reason, and should be obliged to put himself under an obligation not only to a young lady, but to the only young lady in the island.

The only one! It seemed incredible. How the other fellows would chaff him when they heard about it; and how could he shun a young woman who had caught his horse for him, had fed him on her own bread and cheese, and had thereby acquired a sort of claim on his devotion?

Oddly enough, she did not seem disposed to avail herself of it. He had been sufficiently puzzled by her way of talking on the occasion of their first encounter, and by the abruptness of her leavetaking as soon as she had rendered him independent of further help; but as he came to know her better the puzzle grew, and became more interesting in proportion as it was more unintelligible.

There was a grand dinner-party at Government House on the second day after their arrival, given in their honour. Jean was there, of course, to represent the beauty of the island; and so was Keith, as one of the officers selected to accompany the admiral; but though she was standing almost in the centre of the room when he entered, surrounded by a little group of men all vying in paying her attention, he hardly knew her, so different an appearance did she present from the simply-clad young maiden with the wind-ruffled locks, whom he had found sleeping in the sunlight on the day of his misadventure. Yet she was not like any other girl even now. It was in the days when crinolines were not quite gone out, when ladies delighted to make as much of themselves as possible by wearing spreading trains, voluminously flounced; and when hair tortured into an elaboration of curls and rolls was "de rigueur" in a lady's toilet; but Jean's jetty locks were all gathered up into one great shining coil on the top of her small head, and she had on an antiquated gown (which had indeed belonged to a great aunt, and first figured in a minnet at Islington fifty years before) of brocaded satin, the colour of a ripe apricot, without frill or urbelow of any sort, and cut so as to leave her pretty neck and arms bare, save that the latter were covered with an equally

antiquated pair of mittens, and a black lace scarf was tied loosely over the former, with a great bunch of dark red wall-flowers in the bosom.

Keith came in just behind the admiral, so that of course there was a little stir and flutter about the arrival, in the midst of which he caught Jean's eye fixed recognisingly on him, and, as in duty bound, sought an early introduction to her.

"There is no escape from it, and of course she will expect me to be extra devoted to her," he thought, as he went up with a certain "grand air" of resignation, of which he was faintly conscious himself; but, strangely enough, it seemed to make no impression on Jean; nor was her manner at all flattering in its warmth.

"How do you do?" she said, giving him her hand as frankly as if they had been both men. "I hope you haven't been getting into any of our bogs again. I thought I knew your face when you came in."

And then she turned—yes, positively turned her shoulder on him, and said imperiously to a poor impecunious nobody of a junior lieutenant, who was gazing at her in huge admiration:

"Now, go on with that story you were telling me. I want to hear the end of it before we are interrupted again."

Keith walked away, feeling, for the first time in his life, as if he were nobody, and a girl had snubbed him.

The fact is, Jean was a spoiled child, and knew that she was so, and liked it. Her mother had died while she was still in pinafores, and her father, an elderly man, with a yearly increasing weakness for that comfort of which the patriarch Noah had the earliest experience recorded in history, idolised her, suffered her to do exactly as she pleased, and never contradicted her in anything. To be sure, all the matrons in the little society—and there were about a dozen all told—took upon them as a sacred duty, severally and collectively, to advise, warn, scold, and generally look after Jean, whenever they thought she required it; besides foretelling all sorts of evils as the inevitable result of her too frequent neglect of their counsels; but even they treated her with more indulgence than they might another girl; for it was well known that she was a great favourite with the governor's invalided and fastidious wife, and might have married three times over, if she would, the governor's secretary, a young man with a hopeless squint, but otherwise most unexceptionable and likely to become a governor himself in time, with

a wife capable of extending patronage in her own right to other young ladies. Added to all which, who could be very hard on any young creature so wholesome, bright, and sweet-natured as Jean Coniston?

Of course, one half of the officers fell in love with her at once. Not badly or hopelessly in love, perhaps, but with that frank and impetuous worship which sailors are given to lavishing at the feet of the successive fair ones of the successive ports they visit; and which was intensified by the fact of her having no rivals to share it. There were, it is true, three small girls between thirteen and fifteen, who considered themselves grown up, and were asked out and made much of by the elderly men; and there was Mrs. Captain Magee, whose husband commanded the small military detachment on the island, and who had been a belle at Calcutta ten years back, and was still handsome enough, though weighing eleven stone nine, to work great havoc in the breasts of the midshipmen's mess generally; not to speak of Mrs. Wanklyn, a youthful widow, who had been the young lady "par excellence," before Jean's day, and having cast her weeds, was more than willing to resume her old position; but after all, none of these had any chance with Jean. It was she who was the island princess, "*de jure et de facto*," a princess in her own right, and rejoicing in her reign with a light-hearted and childlike zest which disarmed even malice, and riveted still closer the bonds of her willing captives.

Nothing was possible, nothing could be done without Jean. In all the rides, drives, picnics and parties, got up in honour of the flagship, the one yearly saturnalia of festivity to which the worthy colonists surrendered themselves, she was not only the chief and moving spirit, but the central star round which everything radiated; and Keith Fenwick looked on with a sort of irritated wonder, first at the slavish manner in which his fellow-men bowed down to her, and secondly, at the matter-of-course acquiescence with which she accepted their devotion. It was not that she repelled or shrunk from it. If she had, he might have admired her for her maidenly shyness and delicacy; or, on the other hand, that she seemed anxious to attract it, or to set great store by it, when won; both of which phases would have simply disgusted him too much to allow him to take further notice of her; but even he could not deny that, while she took it all as brightly and gleefully as

a child would take its birthday presents, she made no effort to win or retain it, singled out no one for any special preference; or, if she did show any unequal favour, it was generally to someone who from youth or ungainliness had been "left out in the cold" among his fellow-men.

The only person with whom she did not get on amicably, and who seldom parted from her without some sharp words having been exchanged on either side, was Keith himself. Perhaps she had heard his character from his brother-officers, some of whom were jealous of his too easy conquests, or perhaps she was irritated by the coldly critical expression in his blue eyes and the sarcastic turn of his speeches. Anyhow, it was notorious that they did not "hit it off well," to quote Mrs. Wanklyn, who was fond of slang; and the odd thing was that, this being so, Fenwick should not have absented himself from the Conistons' popular and hospitable house altogether; but should have made his appearance almost as frequently as his brother-officers, generally devoting himself, indeed, to the master of the house, to the gratification of that gentleman, who was not in the habit of receiving much attention when his pretty daughter was by; but keeping a cold and, as Jean felt, disapproving surveillance on her and her companions; and not unfrequently acting somewhat as a moral wet blanket on their flow of light-hearted nonsense.

"The father leaves her so completely to herself, and she is so frightfully imprudent, there is no saying where she would let those fellows lead her if she had no one to keep an eye on her," Keith was fond of telling himself, with some unnecessary warmth and aggravation. Why his should be the eye in question he did not stop to explain, and Jean, far from being grateful for this amateur guardianship, resented it with prompt indignation every time that it became apparent.

"Why did he come to see them if he didn't like their ways?" she asked, and indeed with some cause. There were plenty of other attractions in the island—lots of good shooting in the way of teal, snipe, wild-geese, and rabbits; an almost unknown country to explore; good horses to ride; wild cattle, and penguins, and sea-lions to visit; enough, in all conscience, to fill every day of the four weeks of their visit. Why could he not have left Miss Coniston alone, instead of, as she declared, planting himself in her drawing-room, scowling at her admirers, and finding

fault with everything she did? It was bad enough in other places, and on board his own ship especially; but she supposed he considered he had a right to make himself disagreeable there.

She said these last words pouting, and flushing, and looking very naughty and wilful, but prettier than ever, withal, as she stood leaning over the bulwarks in the fore-castle of H.M.S. Parnassus, with her head partly turned over her shoulder, that Keith might hear her better. There was a little entertainment going on on board the fine old ship that night; some amateur theatricals had been got up by the sailors, to be followed by a Christy Minstrel concert from the midshipmen, supper, and an impromptu dance. The dance was called impromptu, but as everybody, from the admiral to the smallest of the Miss Chandlers, knew that it was to be, and as all the ladies had come provided with white satin shoes in consequence, I don't know that the name had any other connection with it than the fancy of the inviters. Perhaps there was an idea that anything impromptu always adds an additional touch of pleasantness to an entertainment; but indeed the Parnassus was noted for the pleasantness of those given on its snow-white boards, and just now, with the whole of the main and quarter-decks roofed and fenced in from the night air with stout tarpaulin, and flags of every brilliant tint and dye and every nation under the sun; lit by countless Chinese lanterns swinging from the extemporised roof; ringing with gay music and bursts of mirth and laughter; and glowing out upon the darkness of the night and the silence of the steel-blue waves, like a huge and gorgeous transparency, a prettier or gayer sight could hardly have been witnessed.

At the present moment, Jean was contemplating it from the outside, and Keith was feeling greatly annoyed with her for so doing. She had persisted somewhat wilfully in declining the seat which had been flatteringly appropriated to her in the foremost row of ladies grouped before the impromptu stage, and had taken one quite in the background, whence, however, her clear, hearty laugh had been heard ringing out with childlike enjoyment more than once during the sailors' little comedy. Then the concert had begun, and all of a sudden Keith saw that her chair was vacant, and that one of his brother-officers

who had been standing behind it, and had once or twice leaned down to whisper to her, was also absent. Everyone else was intent on the music; and the lights being concentrated on the performers, the disappearance of the princess had as yet escaped the notice of any but Keith's keen watchful eyes, when a slight gap among the artistic draping of the flags combined with a puff of cool air to suggest the direction of her flight. For a minute he stood uneasily regarding the gap, and then passed through it and followed her.

He had not far to go. A light laugh wafted on the breeze from that part of a man-of-war's deck where ladies are most seldom to be found, the fore-castle, served as an indication of her whereabouts, and striding in that direction he speedily came on Jean, her white dress gleaming out amid the semi-darkness, her pretty arms, bare and round and dimpled, leaning on the black bulwarks, the cold light of the stars sparkling in her dark eyes and on the wavy masses of her hair, as she sat perched on a gun-carriage, talking to the officer whom Keith had suspected of being her companion. He was not a man of particularly good character, and was considerably below Fenwick, both in social and naval rank; an individual who, but for his position as an officer, and his place in the ward-room mess, would never have been admitted by the latter to even casual acquaintanceship. It made him furious to see him there with Jean, and alone; for all of the sailors who could be spared from duty had been admitted into the tent to witness the performance, and nautical discipline, as well as a species of rough delicacy, kept the remaining few at a respectful distance.

Keith's first thought when he missed Jean was, that she had been taken ill or faint; but when he heard her laugh, that vanished, and his brow was gloomy as that of the ghost in Hamlet as he approached the pair.

Now publishing, the  
**EXTRA SUMMER NUMBER**  
 OF  
**ALL THE YEAR ROUND,**  
 CONSISTING OF  
**SEVENTY-TWO PAGES**  
 (The amount of Three Regular Numbers), stitched  
 in a wrapper,  
**PRICE SIXPENCE,**  
 AND CONTAINING COMPLETE STORIES BY  
**MISS BRADDON**  
 AND OTHER POPULAR WRITERS.

*The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.*